



Arizona Department of Public Safety

- For Immediate Release -

Friday, July 25, 2008

Arizona Department of Public Safety Special Operations Unit Officers Arrest Burglary Suspect after 4 Hour Standoff

Suspect broke into unoccupied home then set it on fire

Arizona Department of Public Safety Officers, the U.S. Marshal's Office and Surprise Police have been looking for 30 year old Kevin M. Kern for the last two weeks. Kern was wanted for numerous burglaries including the theft of the uniform, badge, gun and vehicle owned by Surprise Police Chief Daniel Hughes.

At around 12:00 noon on July 25, 2008, Officers from U.S. Marshal's Office which included DPS and Surprise Police located Kern driving a rental car and conducted a traffic stop at 28th Street and McDowell. Kern ran from the vehicle as officers pursued him. He attempted to break into two other residences before kicking down the door at 1816 N. 28th Street where he barricaded himself in the unoccupied house. After 4 hours of negotiations, Kern exited the rear of the residence through a window but not before setting the house on fire by breaking a natural gas line.

Investigators believe Kern committed numerous burglaries in the last two weeks he was at large. At the time of the burglary of Chief Hughes vehicle, Kern was out on bond release for another crime.

During the entire negotiations, Kern attempted to entice the DPS Special Operations Team (SOU) to enter the residence after he had set several booby traps by using water and electrical cords. Kern also painted the windows so officers could not see inside the house.

Kern was eventually taken into custody in the back yard of the house after being tased by a DPS SOU officer. He was booked into the Maricopa County Jail on numerous charges including his warrant, breaking and entering and arson of a residence. The fire did extensive damage to the house.

"This suspect showed total disregard for the property of everyone including the property owner whose house he set on fire as he made his escape," said Lt. James Warriner of the Arizona Department of Public Safety.

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